WINSTON-SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT
EST. 2019
AIR SUPPORT UNIT

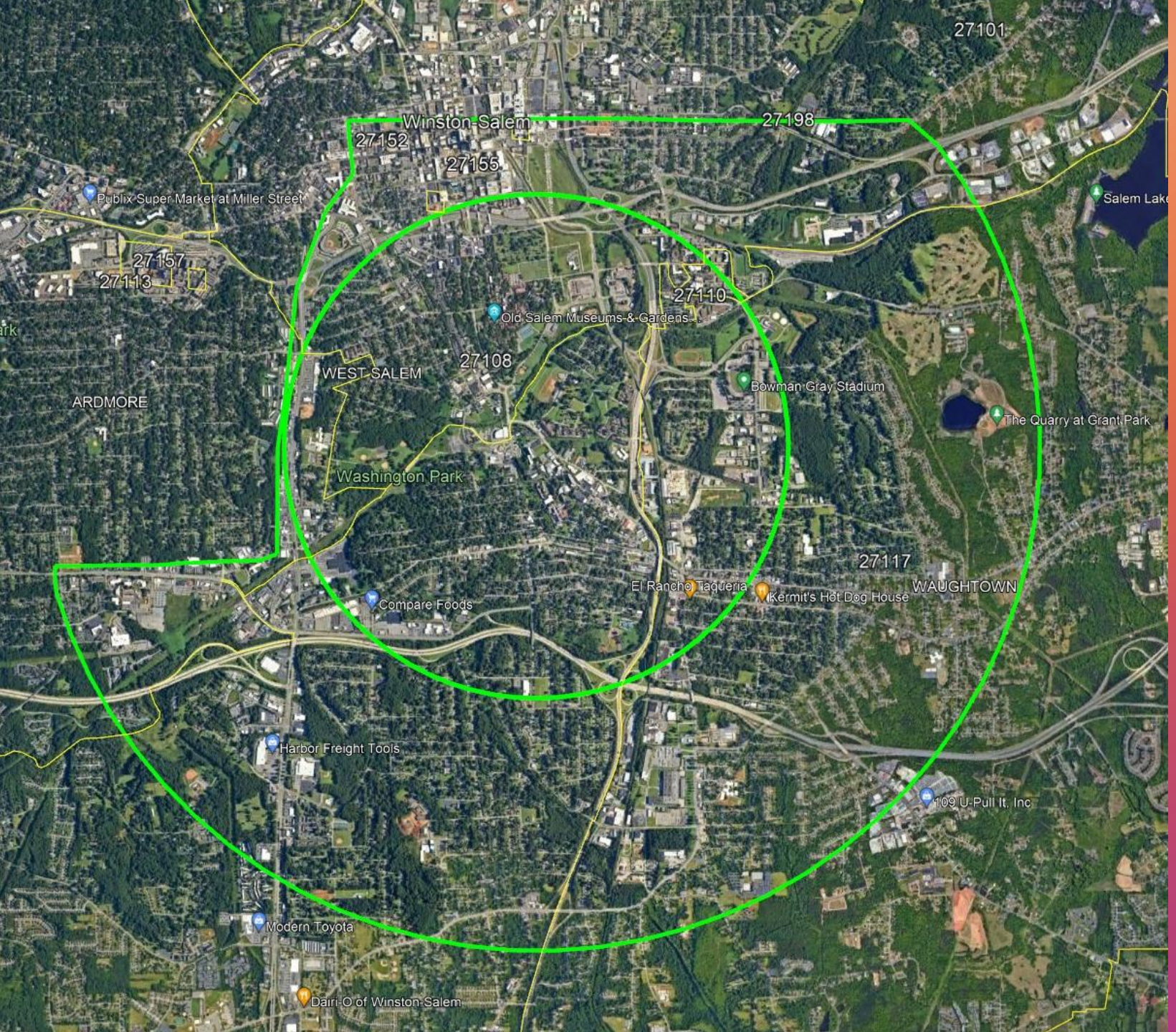
Winston-Salem Police Department
DFR operations

Winston-Salem Police sUAS

Drones have been used in the field by officers since 2018

Current inventory consists of 8 tactical drones (drones used by patrol officers) and 1 DFR drone.

Mission types include searching for missing persons, suspect apprehension and overwatch for officer safety.



Service Area – University of North Carolina School of the Arts

-One site is operational with a 2-mile response area

-Three locations are in discussions.

-Each site is based on calls for service.

DFR Missons report

- First deployment was on June 5th, 2024.
- 175 missions to date.
- The drone arrived on scene 143 times before officers.
- The average response time of the drone is 90 seconds.

27 current pilots- 19 pilots in training

Success Stories

A bank alarm was triggered, prompting two officers to be dispatched with emergency equipment activated. However, the drone, arriving on the scene before the officers, quickly assessed the situation and determined it was a false alarm caused by an ATM being serviced by a technician.

The drone operator was able to communicate this information in real-time, canceling one of the responding officers and ensuring the other officer could deactivate emergency equipment en route. This swift response reduced unnecessary use of resources and mitigated potential risks on the way to the scene.

Success Stories

A dementia patient walked away from a medical facility, prompting an immediate search. Before officers arrived, the drone operator was able to locate the individual quickly. The operator then directed officers to the patient's location, ensuring a safe and swift recovery.

This efficient use of drone technology significantly reduced search time, highlighting its value in critical situations involving vulnerable individuals.

Success Stories

A pizza delivery driver was robbed during a delivery, and the suspects fled the scene on foot. Despite officers being unable to immediately locate the suspects, the Winston-Salem Police Department responded by deploying the DFR drone equipped with thermal technology. The drone operator utilized this advanced capability to successfully locate the suspects at night in a wooded area, leading to their eventual apprehension.

The rapid deployment and use of drone technology played a critical role in securing the scene and ensuring a swift resolution to the incident.

Valued Partners

AEROX

NEXT IN FLIGHT

Career Center

WINSTON-SALEM FIRE-RESCUE

Winston-Salem Department of Transportation

Questions?